1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954) 1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

Ethiopia. The uplands, even though they lie close to the equator, are pleasantly cool at night during the long dry season, and abundant monsoon rains from the Indian Ocean pour down between June and September. 7 132

Rainfall averages approximately 47 inches annually at Addis Ababa[1] and considerably more in the area around Lake Tana. An average of 81% of the rain falls during the three-month rainy season, and about 13% during the irregular light rains in April and May.[2] The water-table remains high during most of the dry season, even when most rivers have dried up, so that irrigation and terrace farming are possible. Both have been practiced, though neither extensively nor intensively, since ancient times. [312]

The Amhara divides the climatic year into the long dry season, Bäg, which lasts until the beginning of the "little rains", and the 3 to 4 month rainy season, kerämt, which the modern-educated Amhara translates as "winter". Terms subdividing these seasons differ locally, which is not surprising considering the extent to which climate is dominated by local topography. 184 805

While the long dry season is climatically monotonous, the rainy season is in daily, dramatic flux. It is the season of tornadoes, often dangerous. On a relatively dry day during the rainy season, usually in the early afternoon, a whirlwind (called Täro) may occur which can even 132

1. US Dept. of Commerce: "Ethiopia", OIT Vol.2, No.12, May 1947, 4 pp.
2. Hann, Julius: Handbuch der Klimatologie, 1908-1911, Vol.2, p. 181.

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

PART II: Utilization of Nature's Products by the Amhara

177 183 Part I established the basis for examination of the culture of the Amhara of Abyssinia and Ethiopia, and the elements included in the long blending process which created Amhara culture. The original, native, Cushitic-speaking culture patterns were based on the geographical milieu, influenced by topographical and climatic conditions of the highlands. On these were superimposed several ancient cultural influences from abroad. The Amhara thus appears as a "semiticized Hamite".

The results of this blending of autochthonous African culture traits and Mediterranean-Asian traits are apparent in both their material and non-material culture. Much survives in Amhara culture of the ancient South Arabian culture pattern: agricultural patterns, occupational divisions, dress, written language, customs and beliefs. Finally, the 184 cultural configuration which had long been the privilege of the Amhara ruling class has in recent historical times become shared by all Amhara; and, still more recently, due to imitation, prestige, conquests, etc, by ever-increasing numbers of the original, formerly Cushitic-speaking sections of the indigenous population.

123 While Part I was concerned largely with dimensions of Time and Space, Parts II and III will be more concerned with the dimension and the use of Energy. In both material and 181 non-material culture the Amhara pattern has remained, at first glance, strikingly "early medieval." Ingenuity with regard to material culture has gone into the utilization of the products of nature, including farming and animal hus-

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

443 press to more permanent quarters. Arabs set up more perma-
369 nent stalls at the market. Girls "between marriages" set up their "hotel services" in makeshift shacks, featuring an imported double bed, and foods like the housewife makes at home, including daily fresh beer. A bizarre variety of trade goods pours in, of foreign or domestic origin. Finally, the government sets up an elementary school-- the most recent development, usually post-1942.

B. Shelter: The Amhara Hut.

342 The Amhara circular hut of wattle and daub, with its overhanging roof to carry off the rains, is called "tuqul" (now more often "sar byet", i.e. thatched house; in some districts, "gojo"). It does not differ basically from the typical habitation of the Cushitic-speaking Galla, of cen- [84] tral Ethiopia. But further south several distinctly different types are encountered, following ethno-linguistic and tribal lines.

The "tuqul" may contain one room or two, through an interior separation or special elevation. It usually houses both the biological family of procreation and their more important livestock which are brought in at night for fear of hyenas. Tuquls in more elaborate hamlets include special storage tuquls, a kitchen tuqul, and even a guest tuqul which may double as extra storage space for the largest beer jars. During the rainy season, when temperatures, especially at night, drop considerably, the family huddles closely around the central fireplace inside the tuqul, and in that 3-month season the tuqul can be considered overcrow-

F: Messing E-5 (1953-1954) 1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

825
223 Quail - "derchet" goose "yebra" (anas aegyptiaca). Perhaps the most common wild fowl very near habitations, but rarely hunted because very small. It is considered a nuisance and a danger because of its habit of hiding in flocks in the tall grass and starting up suddenly, scaring horses and even mules, which is dangerous especially on steep hills. 59

411 Spears, slingshot, and now rifles are used in part-
184 time or sport hunting. Traps ("atmad") and snares are used only by occupational hunting populations living in jungles such as Wolqait and whose pattern of living differs from that of typical Amhara.

222 A noteworthy Amhara exploitative activity is the col-
412 lecting of pumice rock in riverbeds during the dry season, and thus called "yabaher dengay" (river rock). It is used
135 in grinding and husking. Gold comes mostly from south of old-Amhara territory, where it is found in sand gravels and has been sold in nuggets since ancient times.

241 D. Food Production and Consumption

a.) Agricultural production

In agriculture in general, there are two major variables: environment, and degree of sophistication - i.e. power and its application.

The ecology of Ethiopia's highland plateau, where

59. The English equivalent terms have been taken from Van Rosen, Bjorn: Game Animals of Ethiopia. 1953.

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

E. Some Regional Variations, in Amhara provinces.

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423

The sharpest regional variations are between the old-Abyssinian, Coptic north, and the areas conquered by Menelik II to the south. But variations exist to considerable degree among the northern provinces also.

Shoa, particularly the old-Amhara sections, enjoyed many exemptions from burdens which have been mentioned. "Siso" peonage was almost non-existent, and "gultennas" were involved in warfare so much that they enjoyed a maximum of "gult" exemptions. In the past they felt as secure in their tenure as "restenyas". The highest Amhara nobility came from the Shoa districts of "Manz" and "Wanchit", where their lands had actually been "rest" property for centuries. However, in much of Shoa the old kinship holdings had broken up in consequence of the Galla invasion prior to the 19th century. When Menelik II reconquered these areas they became "gult" though under most favorable conditions for "gultennas".

In Gojjam and Begemdir most of the land remained "rest", since Galla invasions did not reach that far to any great extent. This land has remained unmeasured to this day, despite the efforts of the present emperor to ascertain titles to land, replace traditional "status" with "contract", and provide for fixity of tenure. Provincial Amhara resistence to this change is still strong, and the residents have been permitted to continue to pay the low land taxes of 1927 for the time being. In Gojjam, during the rule of the provincial dynasty of Ras Hailu,

184 which ended with his unsuccessful rebellion of 1929,
423 much land was "rest-gult", and there were many kinds of tax exemptions for heirs of veterans, who often paid only the tithe on grain and a small tax on cattle.

In Begemdir province (capital: Gondar), most of the land also remains unmeasured, for the same reason. Much of the land is "rest" owned by kin groups who guard it jealously against alienation; and the old church lands are are regarded as "rest". In the southwestern, lower, section of Gondar town and some nearby rural land, "rest" is owned by Ethiopian Muslims, mostly traders, who purchased it from the church, long ago. In scattered rural areas some families of ethnic specialists like the Falasha smiths own land considered "rest-gult", given to their ancestors in reward for services rendered Menelik's armies in the 19th century. This process has been discontinued (artisans are now in business for themselves and are supposed to pay a trade tax to the central government), and most Falashas live under very uncertain terms of tenure, paying tithe and other taxes, which worries the Amhara claimants to this territory.

F. Crown Lands and Efforts to Centralize Land Tenure.

423
656 In the old tradition of land tenure, the king held some very personal land, inherited or conquered, for the support of the royal household, "mēd-bēt". He added to it by confiscating land of unsuccessful feudal rebels.

796 transferring the blessing of the true cross to their homes.

[184 565] All classes participate in the parade, the bonfire and the worship. There is complete cultural continuum. Even Emperor Haile Selassie parades around the stake three times, accompanied by highest dignitaries of church and state. In the village, the ceremony awaits the arrival of the local cheqa shum and "great men". Old warriors come dressed in their lion-manes and carry the rhinoceros shields of their youth; they boast heroic deeds in the "fukkara". Priests bless the scene and the people, waving cross and incense burners, "blessing the land", so that the harvest will be rich (much as the water is blessed on Epiphany).

Women, as usual, form their own groups, in impromptu singing and rythmic handclapping. The men do not overlook them, bringing them ashes and charcoal from the blessed bonfire, from which the women make a paste with butter and smear the sign of the cross on their foreheads.

Children rise early on the day of "dämmära" to collect their promised gifts. In groups they go from house to house, chanting:

"Let husband and wife consult with each other,
and give us gifts".

Feudal nobles used to take this occasion to acknowledge the knighthood name, the "färäs sem" of young nobles. They also gave a raw beef, "brundo" feast, to their retainers, and a big "gebber"(feast) consuming huge jars full of barley beer, pitchers of mead, and bottles of "araqi" (distilled).

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

608 ced himself under the protection of a landowning kin group, and injuries inflicted on him thereupon can lead to a blood feud as much as if he were a consanguinal relative.

All these attempts to establish artificial kinship are motivated by the attitude that kinship, even at geographical distance, is greater security than close relations with neighbors even of the same district. The proverb says:

[E39] "Your (home) country, where is it?
(It is) Mary's water. (i.e. the womb).
You are my kinfolk!"

8. Attitudes based on Social Stratification

56 Social stratification among the Amhara, as has been shown, is based on land tenure and feudal relations between nobles and peasants; on the temporal as well as spiritual power of the Coptic Abyssinian church; on the ethnic division of skilled labor; on the conquest of border areas and the past subjugation of other ethnic and racial groups; to a lesser degree on age and sex.

565 184 Analysis of the human relations and attitudes arising out of this social stratification can be expressed in terms of class; sometimes approaching caste, because very little social mobility has been "open" to ethnic specialists in skilled labor and to

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

565 racially enslaved groups; there was, and to a consider-
184 able degree there still is, a cultural continuum among
563 Coptic Amhara that is shared by all classes, (with the partial exception of ethnic and racially-separated groups).

A. - Class Stratification.

a/ Regional Distinction and Feudal Nobility.

Regional distinctions are emphasized by both nobles and peasants. The nobles from the old-Amhara districts of Amara Saynt, Manz (both in Shoa province) and of the later developed Gondar district (Begemdir province) consider themselves an upper-upper class even among nobility. At least part of this status is ascribed not only to a local history of "old-nobility" contrast with "new-nobility", but totthe supposed fact that these districts were the only Amhara districts not overrun by the Galla in the 16th century.

The class of nobility is controlled, but also perpetuated, by the emperor. In every generation he gradually raises the young nobles to the rank of their fathers, as each individual advances in age. Usually it is only when the father dies that the son is appointed to full rank. He is not usually raised above it except for unusual service to the emperor. Commoners may be given modest ranks in nobility for special service, thus entering, as "new-nobility", upon the social ladder.

872 easier, in practice, to gain admittance. The efforts of the em-
565 peror to give opportunities to the rural sons of poor orphans of soldiers who died fighting for their country, by opening boarding houses for them, attached to elementary schools, were defeated by the provincial feudal lords and townspeople, who managed to have their sons quartered in them instead.

Thus, traditional social stratification, both class and ethnic, affects even the modern elementary schools. In 1952 about 60,000 children, 10% girls, attended modern elementary schools in Ethiopia, [563] and far more than half this number was Amhara. Ethnic minority groups find it very hard to have their children admitted, because the school administrators are usually Amhara. Thus, the Qemants of Gondar, for example, have found it easier to enroll their sons in the Catholic mission school operated there by Tigrean(Eritrean) priests. Other ethnic minorities have enrolled children in 7th Day Adventist and other mission schools.

871 In Addis Ababa itself the situation is quite different, however,
● 184 Here, traditional social stratification has far less effect, partly
565 because of the closer supervision by more modern officials of the central government, partly because the teachers in the high schools, and even in part in the elementary schools, are Europeans or Americans who emphasize social equality among students, pay no attention to family nobility, and reward only merit. Here, the son of the illiterate peasant, or occasionally even ex-slave negroid Shanqalla, may sit next to the son of an Amhara duke or a Galla "balbat". After graduation, they may be sent abroad for college or post-graduate training, based on merit, regardless of parental rank; though in social and family life the traditional social cleavages
pre[illegible]

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

588 rewards as agreed upon") practiced by the Shi'ites in particular.
171 (footnote 81). The Abyssinian Coptic "Fetha Nägäst" forbids concubinage; but the custom has long been widespread. "Damoz" is even recognized in the modern law of Emperor Haile Selassie.

551 Individual arrangements are freest in "damoz", also in "qurban"
585 though sometimes less so, and least in "semanya". But in all three forms of marriage, the wife retains her maiden name and does not assume that of her husband. Even Empress Menen continues her old name. Sometimes the husband's mother may try to symbolize her authority - or even affection - by giving a new name to her new daughter-in-law living in her hamlet, but the bride's kinfolk and
[602] peers will continue to use her old name. This is another, unconscious, emphasis of kinship relations over affinal ones.

588 The "damoz" is not considered contradictory to monogamy, which may explain her respectability despite prohibition of concubinage in the "Fetha Nägäst" code. Religious persons will explain the paradox away by quoting from Genesis "be fruitful and multiply".

583 In rural districts there is sometimes found a 4th form of
184 marriage, which indeed is re-enacted in some wedding ceremonies of "semanya". This form is bride capture, especially found among families too poor to defray the expenses of a wedding and cows that must be given the "semanya" couple. To cover up the shame and the poverty, the bride is "captured" and "pursued", by pre-arranged collusion. While she ostensibly goes, alone, to fetch water or gather deadwood, the groom's "mize" appear suddenly, preferably on horseback, and carry her off into the bush, while she, though ex-

Footnote 81: Donaldson, D.M.: Temporary Marriage in Iran. Moslem World, 1936, pp. 358-364. Smith, W. Robertson: Kinship and Marriage in early Arabia, 1885.

583 pecting this, screams loudly, making the "capture" official.
184 After some days or weeks, the husband officially informs the bride's parents that he has consummated the marriage and intends to keep the bride as his wife; whereupon the bride's kin can pretend to "give in" and make the best out of the "damage done" without much loss of face, by agreeing to an official "semanya", without a big feast or cows, or "boasting" the "fukkara". But otherwise the legal procedure is that of "semanya", with the cheqa shum present.

[589] A spinster is so rare that she seems non-existant, unless sick and handicapped so that she cannot function as a wife. Therefore, a spinster would be mocked and suspected of hidden ailments. To prevent this, a poor or unpopular girl might ask her kin or spokesman to seek a poor man and ask him "to abduct" her.

582 The new, modern laws have made little attempt to change these
656 traditional forms of marriage, beyond trying to acknowledge and "normalise" them. The new minimm age of marriage is legal at 15 for girls, 18 for boys, but this is generally ignored and evaded in [594] the rural areas where girls still marry at 13 and 14. Through indirect means, the Emperor Haile Selassie has also urged that boys and girls should see more of each other before marriage, have a longer and formal courtship.

178 Very recently, two differing attitudes have developed among
871 young men educated in the modern school system, toward marriage
581 with educated girls. In the provincial towns, the (semi-educated) young men, who have finished elementary school or 7 grades, say that girls who have finished as little as 4 or 5 grades of elementary school consider themselves "educated", are proud, and tell their

585 bride will cry out for many nights because of the pain". But is is also believed that this painful initiation into marriage bodes well for marital happiness, for, if later the husband neglects or mistreats her, she will remind him of his victory: "Remember you were my first, you were the one who hurt me".

●184 585 In towns, several different customs prevail, and modern change, partly in imitation of nobility, partly in imitation of the Italians during their brief occupation, has seeped in, through eager, though partial, imitation.

In town the wedding ("serg") is more elaborate. Instead of the "dass" shelter, a large canvas tent is borrowed. Men and woman still occupy separate tents. But the wedding takes place in daylight, in mid-afternoon, after which the unveiled bride, seated next to the groom, is driven in a rented automobile through the town, followed by other celebrants in varying conveyances or on foot. Before that, there is less boasting by kinsmen warriors and more by hired "azmari" minstrels, male or female, who entertain the wedding guests. If male they often accompany their impromptu verses with the single-string "masenqo" violin; if female, with the native banjo, the "qrar". They permit themselves such liberties as nudging the guests, singing flirtatiously, even aggressively at them, singing praises to rich individuals, the bride and groom, and kinsmen, to extort cash gifts from them.

There are tables and benches inside the tent at which guests are seated by the clever ushers, the hired "asafari" (lit. chamberlain), according to social status and official position in town. The ones of high status, including Europeans, are seated at the host's table (usually the groom's), and are served honey-mead ("tej")

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

184 instead of barley-beer, and the best of available meat dishes.
585 In return, the wealthier guests are expected to leave larger cash gifts as they leave. It is in this tent that the "semanya" marriage is performed, and the bridal couple blessed by the "mänfäs qubaé" priest, who will later watch over their marriage. His blessing is the same as that in the rural hamlet:

[539]

> "May God make you capable of begetting, of conception, for office-holding, for honor, for the communion and the flesh of the Lord. May God guide you to truth and make you kin with Abraham and Sarah".

Though the bride in town may be called out from the women's tent, and thus be the only female eating with the men, seated next to the groom, they still act shy with each other in public. Men like to believe that, though there are no tears in public, brides weep silently, out of fear; - the "vanquished sex". But the groom does not yet patronize her in public with the "gursha", hand to mouth feeding, as he will starting some weeks after.

c) Post-Wedding Adjustments and Kin Relations.

585 After the traditional rural wedding, the "dass" remains standing for a week, in both the groom's and the bride's hamlets, to shelter visitors. After two full days of marriage have passed, the mize go to the bride's hamlet to report on her well-being, adjustment and good treatment. They are feted and sleep in the "dass". The next day they return, carrying an invitation to the bridal couple and a specified number of companions (which is usually exceeded!) to come to the bride's hamlet for a 3-day visit, the "mäla".

7: Perham S-4 (no date)1948
MP5 Amhara MP5

THE NORTHERN PROVINCES: LAND TENURE

The taxation in Gojjam was probably lighter than elsewhere, since, as has just been explained, soldiers were paid here by means of exemption from taxation.

In a study of the system round Lake Tana, mainly in Bagemdir, an Italian writer notes how, side by side with the groups of *restenyas* tracing their hereditary occupation to the first settlements, probably in the fifteenth century, other tenures had grown up. One was that of the *farasenya*[1] to whom the Emperor had made grants of certain privileges and payments amounting generally to about a tenth of the produce of the *restenya* and also the right to exact labour for his land and house and collective gifts upon important feast days. Similar rights, but not including administrative powers, were given to *gultenyas* who, while collecting all the dues owed to the government, had to pay to it an agreed quota of oxen, mules, honey, etc. Thirdly there were the grants of *maskal mariet* (lands of the cross) to the church. In all these cases the rights were often given over the heads of the *restenyas*, who would continue to cultivate their lands as before. As there might be superimposition of new rights over old at the top, there might also be added lower stages by the leasing of land by *restenyas* and others to tenants who would have to pay rent as well as tax.

Side by side with these holders of what may be regarded as private rights would be the hierarchy of the governor. The private rights might cut like islands into the administrative area of his district governors or these might be the *gultenyas* or *farasenyas* themselves and so eliminate the dualism. The *chiqa-shum* who collected the tax would thus pay it either to the *Mislané*, the *gultenya*, the *farasenya* or the *alaqa* (head) of the church. The writer condemns the cumbrousness of this method, with its encouragement of peculation and exactions. The original tax of the people was one tenth of their crop, but the feudal organization had resulted in a multiplication of intermediaries whose great object was to pass on less than a tenth to the government and to exact more than a tenth from the people, enriching themselves on the margin of differences. Those who suffered most were some of the *gabars* who had to support both the church and the *farasenyas*.

An Italian writing of Ethiopian abuses and Italian reforms in 1937 is not likely to underrate the vices of the old system, but there is plenty of comparative evidence, as well as the laws of probability, to suggest that he has not greatly darkened his picture. He states that under the Italian Government, after the conquest, the upper part of the structure[2]

[1] Literally 'horseman' and corresponding, apparently, to the early English 'knight'.

[2] Grottanelli, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 14–15, 105–12.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

dolphus put it.[4] At length, unable to witness the further decimation of his people because of religious controversies, Susneyos abdicated in favor of his son Fāsil. Fāsil lost little time in deporting the Jesuits and restoring the Orthodox status quo.

175* 648 797 643

Recovery

In the wake of all these collisions, Ethiopia made two valiant attempts to regain equilibrium and glory: through the splendor of Gondar in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, and through the force of three emperors of the nineteenth century—Tēwodros II, Yohānnes IV of Tigre, and Menelik II of Shoa.

175* 648 643

Gondar was founded as a new and stationary capital by Fāsil. It served as imperial headquarters for many generations. Later, the kingdom of Tigre knew a resurgence of power that led to control of the empire under Yohānnes (1872–89). His castle at Makalle symbolized one last rally for the north—after an interregnum of a thousand years—before being eclipsed by the Shoan throne.

The shock which began with the invasions of Ahmad Grañ shattered Ethiopia's medieval synthesis once and for all. The political consequence of those disruptions was an increase in provincialism, reaching its climax in the famous "Age of the Princes" (1755–1855) when each province had its own sovereign and for all practical purposes was a polity unto itself. The Solomonic line, the matrix of Ethiopian political unity, was splintered in several directions, leaving contenders in each of the provinces. Though the official imperial line remained at Gondar, Tigre was able to reassert its ancient claims and Gojjam recurrently voiced its separatism, and what may be called the "House of Manz" came to compete with Gondar as a center of national consciousness.

175* 178 635

This political division was accompanied by a peculiar cultural bifurcation. Elements of the national culture that had been rather evenly distributed before Ahmad Grāñ now became relatively specialized in Gondar and Manz. The recovery of Ethiopia produced a geographical division of manners and morals as well as several lines of Solomonic royalty.

175* 184 •

HISTORICAL PROFILES

The Role of Gondar

175* 633

Gondar is the only city in Ethiopia with charm and character expressive of Amhara culture. Even today, despite modern accretions, the remnants of its castles, walls, bridges, and sanctuaries transmit a stately calm, redolent of past nobility and African grandeur.

175* 361

The town is situated on a flat volcanic ridge at seven thousand feet above

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

[MANZ]

29 / *The Legacy of Manz and Gondar*

The history and customs of Manz are more obviously related to its geography than is the case with Gondar. The encircling wall of mountains has been a source of isolation and protection, two factors of great moment in the history of the area. Peculiar eating and clothing habits have developed in response to a climate which, owing to the altitude of Manz and its position at the edge of an escarpment that leads down to a desert of the Rift Valley, is one of the coldest in Ethiopia. The temperature often approaches the freezing point, and in the colder months (October and November) standing in the sunshine at high noon is no defense against a shrill wind that pierces the bones.

Barley is the only crop that thrives in the highest parts of Manz, though wheat, beans, peas, and chick-peas grow in the slightly lower altitudes. But *tĕff*, the grain preferred by Abyssinians for the preparation of their staple food —a kind of pancake known as *ĭnjarā*—cannot be cultivated at those heights, so the Manzē typically eats *ĭnjarā* made of barley.

Sheep are a major item in the Manz economy. The average farm has a herd of 100 to 150 sheep, which provide a heavy wool as well as the Manzē's favorite meat. This wool is used to make the *bānnā*, a warm blanket which is wrapped around the body and constitutes the standard dress of the Manzē. The *bānnā* distinguishes him from other Abyssinians, who wear a white cotton toga called *shammā*. Wealthier men wear the *barnos*, a tailored cape made of dark wool. Manzē wool is also used for the weaving of rugs which ornament the homes of the well-to-do.

No dyes are used in working their wool, so a crowd of Manzēs in natural-colored *bānnā* seen at a distance resembles a flock of their sheep. This is one of the touches contributing to the impressive aesthetic unity of the Manz landscape. The effect is also produced by the fact that the Manzē's house is built of stone, the same stone that is seen everywhere on the terrain; and its conical roof is made of thatch, which makes the roof look like the piles of grain in the fields. The churches are also built of stone with thatched conical roofs. Everything one sees in Manz bespeaks a harmony with the natural environment.

The cold climate of Manz is invigorating. It prevents food from spoiling quickly and discourages diseases which flourish in lower altitudes. The Manzē boasts that his climate keeps people healthy and gives them long lives, and indeed it is not uncommon to find men sprightly in their eighties and nineties. But only the hardy survive, for life there is as rugged as the land, and the people—like their landscape—are stony, bleak, and full of dark recesses.

Manz does not occupy so conspicuous a place in Ethiopian history as Gondar. Indeed, most books on Ethiopia do not even mention the area. While

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

flux of many Muslims and Galla, a migration favored by its urban situation. Manz, surrounded by hostile Galla, was forced for survival to cultivate its fighting powers, and for ultimate security to reconquer the surrounding areas. It was aided in this by whatever special geographical and cultural factors helped to produce the peculiarly militant and defiant character of the Manzē. But because of the annihilation of most of Shoa's churches and monasteries in the sixteenth century, and the isolation of Manz from the renascence of Amhara culture at Gondar, it was left illiterate and culturally impoverished. Its religious life remained limited to a narrow adherence to the ritual requirements of Ethiopian Christianity.

The dispersion of the Solomonic line over the several provinces was thus accompanied by the formation of distinct mores for Manz and Gondar. There is evidence that the differences were quite pronounced by the early nineteenth century. Just a few years before the fierce inhabitants of Manz sped to the rescue of Sāhla Selassie against the rebel Matako, Gondar was similarly threatened by a rebel band under a man named Mersu. Compare Rüppell's account of the behavior of the Gondarēs:

> In this general alarm the pitifulness of the local inhabitants was all too conspicuous. Far from uniting to defend their property with arms against the dreaded plunder—which would have been easy, in as much as there were at least four hundred rifles in Gondar, while not a single one of Mersu's men possessed a firearm—instead they carried the rifles into the churches, in order to keep them from being plundered along with the other booty.[48]

The distinction between Manz and Gondar suggested here is drawn in terms of "ideal types"—generalized dispositions which will, of course, not be true in every case and which will be found elsewhere in Ethiopia to a greater or lesser degree. It is interesting to note that in their own stereotypes, Ethiopians tend to view the Manzēs as fighters, the Gondarēs as literati, but not vice versa. Thus, an officer of the Imperial Bodyguard who commanded Ethiopian troops in the Korean War has said:

> The Manzēs were excellent soldiers. They were independent, not so ready to obey commands as the Galla, but they had good ideas about fighting and were very brave in the battlefield. The soldiers from Gondar tended to be independent and insubordinate, too, but they were not very good soldiers, either.*

On the other hand, Ethiopians commonly consider Manz as much a land of the backward as they regard Gondar the home of the learned. Krapf observed

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* This stereotype of the Gondarē is combatted by Garimā Täfara's book, *The Gondarē with His Shield* (*Gondarē Ba-Gāshāw* [Addis Ababa: Tasfā Gabra Selassie Press, 1957]), which records in great detail the contributions of individual Gondarēs to the fight against the enemy during the Italian occupation.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

over a century ago that the people of Manz had the reputation of being "brave, daring, and ignorant."[46] The caricatures of the typical Manzē usually have to do with his *qilnat* ("stupidity"), such as the old story about the Manzēs at the bottom of a hill who were warned about some rolling boulders and replied: "That's all right, we'll just put our heads under the blanket and then we won't see the stones." As one Manzē himself put it: "We look to Gondar as our older brother. We know we are ignorant and illiterate."

Although in each other's eyes the Gondarē may be arraigned as haughty and cowardly and the Manzē berated as ignorant and hostile, a comparative view enables one to see the differences between Manz and Gondar as complementary, representing a specialization of interest and function within a common culture. An Amhara priest expressed this idea to me by saying: "The people of Gondar and Manz are really the same. Only Gondar is the head, and Manz the foot." (In Amharic thought the leg symbolizes force.) The pursuit of different interests and the perfection of different functions led to the cultivation of different virtues and, by the same token, the indulgence of different faults. The result was what might be called a moral division of labor along a geographical axis.

The primary axis of this division of labor in Amhara culture was vocational. The separate virtues of soldier and cleric were cultivated through distinct roles, pursued part or full time by two different sets of individuals. This permitted both sets of values to be realized without arousing the cultural and psychic conflicts that would inhere in their joint cultivation by the same persons.

It was by historical accident that Manz and Gondar came to provide an additional axis for this division of labor. At Gondar, through the political circumstances described above, the military function withered away, while the religio-literary culture was enabled to flourish. In Manz, the latter was destroyed and never recovered, while the energies of her people were consumed in fighting.

The historical advantage of this was that the Amhara thereby found the occasion for a massive revitalization of their religious culture through the facilities at Gondar, yet were able to accumulate a military momentum, through the years of incubation in Manz, that favored a political comeback which put them in a position to assert their might over an area larger than ever before in Ethiopian history. The moral consequence was that the Gondarē and the Manzē developed in pronounced form the virtues of the literatus and the soldier, respectively. The total culture was perhaps thereby enriched. Alaqā Gabra Hānnā, cultivated literatus, was in a sense the epitome of the Gondarē ethos, just as Menelik II, determined fighter as well as shrewd politician and tactful diplomat, was morally as well as genealogically akin to the men of Manz. The imperial court at the end of the nineteenth century,

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As for the beginning and end of the world, all Amhara believe that the world was created at one time by the will of God. When the eighth millennium arrives, moreover (A.D. 2508), God will bring about a major upheaval, either destroying the world completely or, as others believe, turning it upside down. According to the latter view, all those who live at that time will perish, while those who died first in the world's history will return to life, to a time of renewal, when a little grain will go a long way and the milk of one cow will nourish a multitude.

The Amhara peasant's view of nature is matter-of-fact. There are a few traces of animism, such as the association of certain kinds of trees with holy places and the belief that whatever is planted on the monthly commemoration of Christ's birth will dry up and die. There are a few touches of aesthetic appreciation, such as the peasant's wonderment over a remarkable view when it is thrust upon him and his desire, when feasible, to locate his home in an attractive locale. But there is certainly no idealization, religious or secular, of the great outdoors. The peasant much prefers to get out of the bright sunshine and rest in the dark, smoky interior of his hut. When he sits gazing over the hills and slopes of his gorgeous country, he is probably counting his livestock or noticing how the grain is growing.*

The Amhara peasant's life is so much a part of nature that he does not view it as a separate category of experience; there is no word for "nature" in his vocabulary. Nor is there a sense that the things of nature have minds or laws of their own. Nature is simply the passive agent of God's rewards and punishments; for example, the man who fails to keep the Orthodox fasts will find that his crops are ruined.

For his part, the peasant's adjustment to nature is a straightforward practical one. He has no drive to conquer or to be master over nature; he has no inclination to fuse or lose himself in nature; he has no need to keep nature in equilibrium through a system of rituals. His perception of natural objects is in terms of what will assist or hinder eking out a subsistence. The farm animals are his friends, and must be taken care of properly or else they will die and he will be without their help. The wild beasts are his enemies, and they must be guarded against or else they will eat his crops, his livestock, or himself. The fields must be plowed at the right time each year or the bins will become empty, and knowing the right time depends upon a sufficient knowledge of weather to judge the coming of the various kinds of rain.

Thus, the motif in the Amhara peasant's orientation toward nature is to get what one can out of what nature readily provides, neither neglecting one's responsibilities to keep things running as nature requires, nor inflicting any

* All the TAT respondents interpreted card No. 4, showing two men sitting on a ridge overlooking a natural panorama, in terms of taking care of the grazing animals and becoming wealthy.

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For the groom, too, marriage means a gratifying boost toward adult status, symbolized by his receiving from the bride's parents distinctively adult male possessions—a *kutā*, perhaps a *barnos*, and a rifle if they can afford it.

Such is the basic pattern of betrothal and marriage among the Amhara, though many of the details vary from province to province.[6] There are, in addition, certain traditional alternatives to this standard procedure. One of these involves the solemnization of the marriage oath by taking Communion, a rite necessary for a marriage to be counted as legal by the Church, and followed by the ordained clergy and the most pious families. Another form requires no oath at all; the husband is simply expected to provide a salary and clothes for his wife. This procedure is followed chiefly by soldiers and traders, and by those who are marrying for the second time.

Still another type of marriage is that known as *qoṭ assīr* ("ten beds") in which the boy goes to live with the girl's family while both are quite young. In this case the boy has his work apprenticeship under the girl's father. After several years, when the girl reaches puberty, a second wedding ceremony will take place—this time at the home of the groom's parents—and the union will be consummated. This type of arrangement tends to be made when the boy's family is too poor to provide enough to get him started on his own, or if the girl's father has no son to help him with the work.

There is, finally, a form of marriage by abduction. If the girl's father does not grant the request of the emissaries of the boy's father, and if the boy's father is still interested, the boy may go with two or three friends to capture her when she is on the way to market or fetching water. When this happens, the couple will approach the girl's parents after they have been married for some time and seek a reconciliation. Occasionally poor families have deliberate recourse to this form of marriage, arranging in advance a bride capture so as to avoid having to prepare the expensive wedding feasts.[7]

Although marriage marks the termination of childhood for the Amhara, it does not by itself signify the full attainment of adulthood. The newly wed couple lives at first in the home of the boy's father, and to truly "arrive" they must establish their own separate household. If the boy's family is wealthy, he may have his own house ready by the time of the wedding. More often, the couple spends a certain amount of time—a few months, or in some cases as much as two or three years—living in the home of the groom's father until their own house is built. To tarry unduly in the father's house, however, is considered a mark of laziness and a great shame.

Furthermore, because of the somewhat arbitrary manner in which the spouses are chosen for each other, there is often a serious problem of post-marital adjustment, a problem not rendered any less difficult by the proximity of the girl's mother-in-law. The divorce pattern is well known among

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be many years later, as a learned priest or *dabtarā* or as a successful warrior or official, and some sort of reconciliation might be effected with his family. In either case, from a sociological viewpoint, the rebellious youth is merely preparing himself to take over one of the more specialized functions on which the wider social order depends. His break with his parents does not signify a revolt against society, but, if anything, a closer attachment to society through more intimate alliance with its highest values, religion and warfare.

Thus there has always been some room for the attainment of a new social identity in Abyssinia. Although the rigidity of paternal authority often meant that it must be attained through rebellion, the adolescent could eat his cake of defiance and still have his cake of loyalty; and the social system was well served thereby.

ADOLESCENCE IN CHANGING ETHIOPIA

The foregoing description of adolescence still obtains for the vast majority of Amhara youth today. Side by side with this traditional pattern of "growing up on the farm," however, a quite different pattern of childhood and adolescence has been developing in Addis Ababa and in some of the provincial capitals. This new pattern follows the course of experience provided by participation in the government school system. It has radically interrupted the traditional rhythm of growing up and has posed more integrative problems than it has yet been able to solve.

The Welfare School

Public education in Ethiopia prior to the Italian invasion represented a small but significant trickle of activity alongside the mainstream of traditional institutions. Perhaps some six to seven hundred boys and girls received the beginnings of a modern education in the government schools of Addis Ababa by 1935.[9] Many others received some elementary education in government provincial schools and in schools operated by foreign religious missions, though the latter never played as significant a role in Ethiopia as they did in colonial Africa.

During the occupation, Ethiopians were prevented from acquiring anything higher than elementary education, but the Italians did construct a number of school buildings for their own nationals which facilitated the growth of the Ethiopian school system after 1941. By 1944 there were some 25,000 pupils enrolled in government schools, a figure which rose to 60,000 by 1950 and reached 234,000 in 1963.[10]

The base of the Ethiopian educational program has been an eight-year elementary curriculum, the first four years being taught in Amharic and the

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cultures of different schools account for a few other minor variations. Thus, for example, preference for Scottish dance is expressed chiefly among students of a school run by a British staff; the only kind of foreign music preferred by students of the Theological School is Sudanese music, that is, the kind most similar to Ethiopian music; and the University College, most urbane of the Ethiopian schools, is the only one where a majority of respondents indicated that they enjoy smoking.

Of all the differences, the most conspicuous is that between the secondary

TABLE 10

AESTHETIC PREFERENCES OF STUDENTS

Area of Consumption	Percentage of Students Who			Number
	Prefer "Traditional" or "Ethiopian" Forms	Prefer "European" or "Foreign" Forms	Indicate No Preference	
Dress for women	85	15	0	(700)
Food	80	16	4	(700)
Cigarettes*	71	10	19	(700)
Dress on holidays	70	26	4	(700)
Poetry	67	26	7	(700)
Music	62	35	3	(700)
Manner of eating†	40	58	2	(700)
Dance	38	56	6	(700)
Drink	24	56	20	(700)
Painting	23	67	10	(700)

* "Like to smoke" versus "do not like to smoke."

† Combines responses on "*gurshā*" and eating in common or at individual places, which were practically identical.

school students and the college students. For in each of the areas discussed above in which traditional or Ethiopian patterns were set alongside European or foreign patterns, *the move from the secondary level to college level was accompanied by a decrease in preference for traditional patterns.*

If now we overlook these differences and calculate the total response, we obtain the profile shown in Table 10, which provides some idea of the range of variation in the students' taste with regard to items from Ethiopian and foreign cultures.

Morals.—The moral values reinforced during traditional Amhara adolescence are by no means rejected during modern Ethiopian adolescence, but their significance is somewhat attenuated due to the new conditions of life in

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565 554 The local nobility, on the other hand, were eminences whose lives and reputations were bound to a more circumscribed locale. While the non-royal nobility, or *makuānnent* in the stricter sense, performed as high dignitaries at the imperial court and governors of large provinces, the local nobility were district chiefs and judges, or even simply wealthy landowners, who enjoyed considerable deference. Though they might not be known outside of their home regions, these men were, for the mass of the population, the lords of existence. *Ka-Gondar negus / yāgar āmbārās*, "the petty district chief [is obeyed] more than the Gondar king"[19] expresses folk wisdom on the subject. The Amharic terms which designate this class of men are *bālābbāt* and *shum*, terms we shall want to consider more closely below.

565 184 Despite these distinctions among members of the upper stratum of Abyssinian society, with respect to their general orientation and style of life they differed only in degree. They created and shared what might be called a "gentry subculture," even though it was not so differentiated from the general culture as was the case in Europe and China. In the present context, it will be meaningful to treat them as a single status group.

565 184 86 [576] Special manners and skills were self-consciously taught to children of the *makuānnent*, most of which remain part of the gentry subculture today. An etiquette of instinctual inhibition is taught. Some attention is given, for example, to toilet training, which is spontaneous among peasant children. Spitting in public is proscribed. Physical aggression is discouraged in favor of the more subtle forms of satire and patient manipulation of others. A quiet, reserved manner of speaking is stressed, in contrast with the less inhibited and cruder self-expression of the peasantry. Dignity of comportment is expected at all times; a noble should not, for example, express great enthusiasm or surprise over anything. Sobriety is inculcated as a virtue; alcohol is *la-çhawā lījj* [293] *mādasetchā / la-bālagē māzabābatchā* ("for the nobleman's son a stimulant, for the commoner an intoxicant"). In short, the gentry subculture stresses the general ideal of bringing a child up to be conspicuously genteel, or *çhawā*.

565 184 868 [871] [534] [883] Sons of the nobility have traditionally followed a privileged curriculum.[20] They were given lessons in horseback riding and weaponry at an early age. They were also taught how to swim, an uncommon skill among the Abyssinians. Reading would often be taught, for which schooling a man of the church might be brought in as a tutor, or the boy might be sent for a while to a monastery. He might also learn how to play the *baganā*, the ten-stringed lyre used to accompany certain forms of religious and plaintive secular songs. Instead of spending his teen-age years at the plow, which was regarded as beneath his dignity, the noble boy would follow his father to court and observe the ways of litigation and the manner of passing judgments; or he might be sent as a page to the court of the king or some great lord.

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The instruction of girls in noble families was not so different from that of peasant girls, though they were spared some of the menial drudgery. The *çhawā* girl would be taught all the household arts, but it was understood that she would be provided with numerous slaves to do the work after marriage. Her own adult chores would be limited to the preparation of *ṭaji*, the beverage of the nobility, and special dishes for her husband; while the preparation of *ṭallā* and food for guests would be the work of domestics.

The style of life of the nobility is colored above all by a seemingly unlimited command of deference. They are addressed as "my lord" by all comers, and waited on in a hundred ways wherever they go. Every "big man" is attended by a flock of servants and retainers, who accompany him on trips and spare him the slightest exertion. This is so elemental a feature of Amhara culture that big men are commonly referred to with the associative prefix *enna-*; for example, *enna-Dajāzmātch Hailu*, meaning "Dajāzmātch Hailu and his men."

The social space of a nobleman is crowded with the issuing of commands. When he visits the home of another, he orders the servants and young people there just as imperiously as if he were in his own home. The wives of the nobility develop much the same manner, though from a more passive position. They spend a good deal of their time sitting on their beds and issuing orders. This sort of indolent, vegetative existence has produced the obese figure and morose countenance for which some Abyssinian ladies have been noted. On the other hand, from her particular vantage point the noble lady has often played an influential and enlightened part in court and regional politics.

Conspicuous consumption among the *makuānnent* thus takes the form of a surfeit of servants. The household of a nobleman of modest rank might boast, in addition to numerous maidservants who procure and prepare food and drink for the establishment, as many as ten to fifteen male servants. Plowden has left us a description of some of their functions:

> One carries your shield, and whenever you go out he saddles your mule and accompanies you, and in the house he makes himself generally useful about your person; another makes your mead, arranges it, and is also perhaps a gunner, and supplies you with game; another is doorkeeper and order-keeper generally. One or two, older and wiser, are counsellors, and their knowledge of the country, and of customs and tricks, is of the greatest service; another has charge of the corn, watching that the maidservants do not steal, and arranging the allowance of all the rest; others are grass-cutters only, according to the number of your beasts; another is a wood-cutter for firewood, very necessary in a country where they have no coal, and the wilderness is free to all.[21]

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covers the Amhara home.* The latter is related to customs concerning adoption.

The adoption of children among traditional Amhara takes place through a ritual in which the child sucks the honey-dipped thumb of his intended foster parent. The latter thereby becomes the child's *ṭuṭ abbät*, or breast-father. In some cases the child actually sucks the nipples of the *ṭuṭ abbät*. Used metaphorically, the image of sucking someone's breast is employed to indicate becoming close to, or ingratiating oneself with, a superior; breast-feeding is so explicitly connected with emotional security that people are inclined to allude to it when finding a new source of security.

The Amhara's attachment to passive, pleasurable activities centering on the oral zone appears in a wide variety of forms. Manipulation of the lips is one of these. Amhara often stand about fingering their lips or rubbing them against some object, much as people in another culture might scratch their heads or stroke their chins. Children may be humored by having their lips played with by a relative. The frequent covering and uncovering of the mouth with a part of the toga, that is so characteristic of the Amhara, may be a sublimated form of this.

The lips are used in Amhara culture for a variety of expressive purposes. The Amhara identify persons and places, not by pointing with the finger or hand, but by distending the lips in a certain direction. Kissing, while seldom used for romantic purposes, serves a number of other expressive functions. Relatives or friends of either sex kiss each other on both cheeks after a long separation, the older or superior in status kissing first. Children and servants greet their superiors by kissing their feet, which they also do to show gratitude for some favor. One kisses one's own hands before extending them to receive a gift. Kissing one's fingers is done to signify an oath or a special appreciation of something, the meaning being "I swear by it."

Religious sentiment is typically expressed through kissing. The devout Amhara kisses his fingers and touches the table to show thanksgiving after a meal. The church is greeted by kissing a part of the building, and going to church is referred to as "kissing the church." Following devotional services the priest's cross is kissed by all present, and often the Holy Book is kissed as well. When the ark is brought outside on holidays, reverence is shown by falling to the ground and kissing the earth.

While, moreover, romantic kissing is an uncommon activity among the Amhara, Amharic literature at times represents this activity with poignant intensity. Thus, in an unwritten Amharic couplet one hears:

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* The Gurage, by contrast, place a straight stick atop their homes. So do the Amhara of Gojjam Province.